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Wednesday, 14 August 2013, 10.15 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Perceval	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Ahmad
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	Togo	Mr. M'Beou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/470)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/470)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Babacar Gaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic; Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; and Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/470, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic.

I now give the floor to Mr. Gaye.

Mr. Gaye (*spoke in French*): It is a privilege to address the Security Council. Doing so as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General is an honour accorded to me for the first time, and I take this opportunity to express my deep respect to the Council.

I am pleased to present to the Council the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/470) and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), in the presence of Under-Secretary-General Valerie Amos and Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović, both of whom visited the Central African Republic in July and will discuss the humanitarian and human rights situations.

(*spoke in English*)

Since the publication of the report, the overall situation in the Central African Republic has remained highly volatile and unpredictable, although there has been some progress on the political front. Following the promulgation of the Transitional Charter, on 18 July, and in accordance with its article 25, the Government of National Unity appointed on 13 June was reshuffled on 2 August. While its composition remains almost the same, Mr. Michel Djotodia is no longer Minister of Defence; a new Junior Minister in charge of defence, restructuring of the army, former combatants and victims of war was appointed instead.

The portfolio of water and forests held by former Senior Minister Moussa Dhaffane has been filled. The representation of women remains low, with only three women out of 34 members of the Cabinet, although they hold key ministries such as foreign affairs and rural development; the Minister who holds the latter is also State Minister.

Similarly, the National Transitional Council, which was expanded from 105 to 135 members in July, appointed a new Bureau on 8 August. While the re-election was requested by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to ensure greater diversity and representation, the Bureau remains almost intact, with only one of the Rapporteurs losing his seat.

Meanwhile, the members of the Transitional Constitutional Court will be sworn in on 16 August. They will administer the oath of office to Mr. Djotodia, as the head of State of the transition, on 18 August. According to the Transitional Charter, the ceremony will officially launch the transition, which should last from 18 to 24 months. Thus most of the transitional institutions and mechanisms have been established in accordance with the decision made by ECCAS.

That progress was made possible thanks to the direct involvement of ECCAS leaders and the Mediator they appointed for the Central African Republic, President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo. However, tensions persist between Mr. Djotodia, Prime Minister Tiangaye and the President of the National Transitional Council over the management of the transition process. Their relations are characterized by mutual suspicion and mistrust. Therefore, the political gains made remain fragile, while the road map for elections remains to be established.

While there is still a total absence of the rule of law nationwide, the security situation has improved slightly in Bangui following the arrest of General Mohamed Moussa Dhaffane, a former prominent military leader of one of Séléka's factions and Senior Minister for Water and Forests. Nine sites for the cantonment or regroupment of Séléka have been established in five localities, and four sites for the cantonment and regroupment of former elements of the Forces armées centrafricaines, the former army, were also established.

Joint patrols by Séléka and the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), the subregional peacekeeping force, have resumed in the capital. However, the looting of people's property, plundering, kidnapping, torture and killings continue. For example, a so-called Ramadan tax was paid by local people in the provinces. On 9 August, armed men suspected of being Séléka elements robbed a local supermarket in broad daylight and kidnapped the owners. In addition, human rights violations have become widespread, further compounded the breakdown of law and order, particularly in the provinces, where Séléka elements continue to prey on the civilian population.

We must ensure that there is no impunity for perpetrators of gross human rights violations. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation has reached unprecedented levels; 4.6 million people are affected by the dire humanitarian crisis, which has moved from a protracted humanitarian crisis towards a complex emergency. Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović and Under-Secretary-General Amos will present the Council with a detailed picture of the grave human rights and humanitarian situation, respectively.

As there is no proper chain of command, the country runs the risk of descending into anarchy and chaos. Some police officers are reporting to work, but they are not equipped to work safely and effectively. Furthermore, they do not trust but fear their Séléka counterparts.

The reorganization of the security and defence forces is yet to be supported by a clear, credible and structured plan. In that regard, the police and the gendarmerie were instructed to absorb 500 Séléka elements each, including suspected foreign elements, without prior screening to determine their suitability. The intended integration of an additional 1,000 Séléka elements into the newly established Armée de la République centrafricaine is not based on any set of objective criteria either.

The integration process in the police faces the challenge of the lack of proper facilities, as the Training School of the National Police is still occupied by a MICOPAX contingent. Many elements of the Forces armées centrafricaines have reported for duty at four different sites in Bangui, although some have also sought refuge in neighbouring countries, including the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cameroon, with their weapons. Diplomatic efforts are under way for their voluntary repatriation. Discussions were ongoing between the Séléka leadership and the rebel group Force démocratique du peuple centrafricain, led by Abdoulaye Miskine.

Meanwhile, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has continued to thrive in the turmoil caused by the political events of March 2013. Since May 2013, BINUCA has been receiving reports on the presence of LRA elements in the prefecture of Haute-Kotto, where the diamond sites are located.

On 19 July, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council authorized the deployment, for an initial period of six months, of an African-led peace support operation, the International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, effective 1 August 2013. The new mission will have a total strength of 3,652 civilian and military personnel, composed mainly of the contingents currently serving in MICOPAX. The mission is mandated to protect civilians and restore security and public order; restore State authority; reform and restructure the defence and security sectors; and create the conditions conducive for the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need.

The mission has a robust mandate and will have an important role in stabilizing the security situation. The African Union is dispatching a technical assessment mission to Bangui from 17 August to refine the concept of operations for the mission and to develop a realistic logistical support plan for the mission. The United Nations will participate in that technical assessment mission in an advisory capacity. In parallel, the AU is also deploying a joint transition planning team to Libreville to develop, jointly with ECCAS, the modalities for the transition from MICOPAX II to the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic.

We welcome the establishment of the African Union mission and encourage the Security Council to lend its full support to the force. We hope that the forthcoming deployment of the impartial force that is the new mission will provide the leverage needed to end the anarchy and the chaos in Bangui and in the provinces.

On the political front, Mr. Djotodia, the Prime Minister, and the President of the National Transitional Council must work together to urgently bridge their differences, which, if unaddressed, could jeopardize the progress made thus far and seriously aggravate the crisis in the country. Moving forward, there will be a need to agree on a road map and a chronogram to end the transition period and hold elections. There will also be a need to tackle the question of impunity and ensure proper assistance to populations in need.

(*spoke in French*)

The Central African Republic is facing tremendous challenges, but I am convinced that with the continuing and active support of the international community, along with political will on the part of stakeholders, together we can overcome those difficulties. During my discussions with national stakeholders and with leaders in the subregion, I took every opportunity to draw their attention to the imperative need to resolve the security problem, which remains by far the most urgent priority. Without a doubt, much remains to be done elsewhere, but resolving problems relating to security and the rule of law will have a positive and immediate effect on the political, humanitarian and human rights challenges that we are facing. In short, it is time to act.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Gaye for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Amos.

Ms. Amos: I thank you, Madam, for the opportunity to brief the Council on the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic following my recent visit to the country with Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

The political and security situation in the Central African Republic, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Gaye, has already said, remains volatile and unstable. The new Government of National Unity is fragile and faces considerable challenges, including divisions within Séléka; the proliferation of weapons in Bangui and beyond; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts; and the absence of State administration outside of Bangui.

Over the past months, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated dramatically and has shifted from being a long-term crisis of poverty and chronic vulnerability to a complex emergency characterised by violence, acute needs and grave protection issues. If inadequately addressed, the crisis threatens to spread beyond the Central African Republic's borders and to further destabilize a region already facing significant challenges.

As Special Representative Gaye has already said, all 4.6 million Central Africans have been affected by the crisis. Half of them are children. Some 1.6 million people are in dire need of assistance, including food, protection, health care, water, sanitation and shelter. Humanitarian needs are increasing by the day. More than 206,000 people have been internally displaced and nearly 60,000 have sought refuge in neighbouring countries — two-thirds in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Many people continue to hide in the bush and remote areas in poor sanitary conditions and without access to basic services or clean water. More than 650,000 children are not able to go to school due to the closure and occupation of schools by armed groups. Some 484,000 people are now severely food insecure, and thousands of boys and girls are acutely malnourished.

During our visit, we heard reports of armed attacks against civilians, illegal detention, torture and abductions, and according to UNICEF, 3,500 children have been recruited into the armed forces and groups during the conflict. I am also extremely concerned about reports of widespread sexual violence, with women and children again paying a heavy price.

The already fragile health-care system is overwhelmed. Many public service officials have left their posts and health care is now being provided almost entirely by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Basic drugs and hygiene products cannot be purchased locally due to the breakdown of the supply chain. The risk of disease outbreaks is very high, and international NGOs already report a spike in malaria. The replacement of goods in hospitals, such as generators, and supporting the supply, for example, of fuel will be challenging, and the risk of further looting remains high. During a field visit to a hospital in Kaga Bandoro, I saw the daily struggle doctors and

nurses face to provide for the most basic health needs of people. The hospital, with just 60 beds, serves as many as 130,000 people throughout the province. Most of the mattresses had been looted and there is no electricity.

The deterioration in the security situation since December 2012 is of great concern and needs to be addressed. I visited United Nations premises that had been looted and some United Nations premises remain occupied by Séléka elements. Persistent insecurity and the degradation of infrastructure have posed serious challenges to the humanitarian response. Despite that, we have reached nearly 160,000 people with food assistance and nutrition programmes; 590,000 have benefited from water and sanitation programmes; and 200,000 have received health support. But this is tiny in comparison with widespread needs throughout the country.

NGOs have played and continue to play a significant role. Many remained present in the areas worst affected by fighting, and I thank them for their ongoing work. Staff from the United Nations are in the process of deploying beyond the capital. Redeployment to Paoua, Bouar, Kaga Bandoro and Bambari began on 10 August. Human rights and protection monitoring will also be increased. The establishment of a United Nations presence in new areas will provide assistance and much-needed protection.

The authorities in the Central African Republic have shown a genuine willingness to cooperate with humanitarian actors to address the challenges we face. During our visit, the authorities reiterated their commitment to facilitating the humanitarian response, including guaranteeing the security of humanitarian workers. Encouragingly, officials identified the restoration of security and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration as their main priorities. However, as already stated by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Gaye, they face a considerable challenge given the numbers of the Séléka forces, the lack of command and control over them, and the presence of fighters from other countries.

Humanitarian assistance cannot be the long-term solution to the complex challenges facing the Central African Republic. A comprehensive response, prioritizing the restoration of security and addressing humanitarian, recovery and development needs, is urgently needed. The authorities must do more to protect civilians and respect human rights. That includes releasing and reintegrating children associated with armed groups. Those children are the next generation of Central Africans, and we must ensure they have the opportunity to contribute to a peaceful future.

I have a number of requests to make to the Council. First, in order to support the restoration of security and stability in the Central African Republic, I ask the Council to treat the request for support by the African Union (AU) for its newly established peacekeeping mission, the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, with urgency. It is critical for the continued safety of humanitarian operations that the AU Mission have the funds and logistical support to operate effectively.

Secondly, I ask the Council to again remind all parties to the conflict of their responsibilities under international humanitarian and human rights law, and to ensure that all those responsible for violations are held to account.

Thirdly, I ask Council members to use any influence they have on the authorities to facilitate dialogue towards political reconciliation.

Fourthly, we need to increase funding. Only 32 per cent of the $195 million required has been raised to date. While the European Union (EU) announced an additional contribution during our visit, bringing its emergency relief to €20 million this year — and it is the highest donor — much more international support is required to meet growing needs. Critical sectors, such as water, sanitation and hygiene, have received less than 10 per cent of the funding required.

Finally, I ask the Council to support the authorities in expediting the swift return of public service officials to areas outside Bangui to facilitate the restoration of much needed basic services. We need to make the longer-term investments required to put the country on the path back to recovery and self-reliance.

The Central African Republic is not yet a failed State, but has the potential to become one if swift action is not taken. Despite the significant challenges, there is an opportunity for the international community, working with the authorities, to make a significant contribution to the political, economic and social development of the Central African Republic. A failure to act now could not only prolong and exacerbate the appalling conditions the people of the Central African Republic have had to endure, but could also see the crisis spread beyond its borders and throughout a region already facing enormous challenges.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Amos for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Šimonović.

Mr. Šimonović: I thank you, Madam, for the opportunity to brief the Council. I visited the Central African Republic from 28 July to 2 August to discuss human rights challenges with the transitional authorities and identify ways to address them. My mission followed a fact-finding mission sent by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to Central Africa from 19 June to 11 July to gather information on human rights violations committed from December 2012 onwards, in order to report to the Human Rights Council in September. During my mission, I met with the Prime Minister of the transitional Government and key ministers, as well as victims, civil society organizations, religious leaders, the diplomatic community and United Nations colleagues.

The Central African Republic has been plagued by decades of fighting and instability. The Bozizé regime's corruption and its neglect of and discrimination against the north of the country, which has a large Muslim population, are among the numerous factors that contributed to the rebellion. Many of the country's problems, such as the weak justice system and poor access to health and education, are not new. However, the conflict was marked by an unprecedented level of violence, looting and destruction.

From December 2012 to March 2013, both Séléka and the former Government's forces committed serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, although the majority of the human rights violations and abuses were committed by Séléka elements. Following the seizure of power by Séléka on 24 March, human rights violations committed by Séléka have continued until today.

The abuses committed include extrajudicial killings, summary executions, forced disappearances, hostage-taking, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, sexual and gender-based violence, grave violations against children — including killing, sexual violence, the recruitment of child soldiers, and the use of children as human shields — and the destruction and looting of private and public property, including hospitals, schools, administrative buildings and United Nations and other international premises. Retaliation measures against civil society activists and journalists who are critical of the transitional authorities have also been reported.

While widespread attacks and looting of Christian places of worship by Séléka elements have been reported, there have been a number of initiatives to contain religious tensions, including the establishment of a platform for dialogue between Catholic, Protestant and Muslim religious leaders. When meeting with the Archbishop and the head of the Islamic community, I was encouraged to see that they closely collaborate to prevent confrontations and violence between religious groups. It is important to strengthen this collaboration in order to prevent a dangerous deepening of the religious divide.

Some communities have violently opposed Séléka elements trying to arrest alleged suspects. This has in turn been met by ruthless retaliation by Séléka elements, including killings and the burning of entire villages.

Another disturbing element is the systematic and widespread destruction of public registries, from birth certificates to court and prison records. This is fuelling suspicions of an attempt by the Séléka coalition to modify the ethnic and religious balance, given the porous borders of the country. The lack of public records to establish voter lists poses an additional challenge to organizing free and fair elections in the next 18 to 24 months — an issue about which Special Representative of the Secretary-General Gaye has already spoken.

Currently, while security in Bangui has improved, in the rest of the country the State is almost non-existent. There is no security or rule of law, and no police, prosecutors or judges, but unpaid Séléka forces are everywhere, often sustaining themselves through extortion or looting. Most hospitals and schools are not functioning and have been looted. The Bambari court of justice, which I visited, is an empty building with no tables. Its doors and windows are broken, and remnants of official records and documents are scattered about the floor.

Fear is pervasive everywhere. Victims, witnesses and civil society organizations spoke to me about their fear of being killed, physically or sexually assaulted, or looted. They spoke of their fear of speaking out, going to the fields or going home after dusk. Some do not even dare to go home at all, but remain hidden in the bush. In some areas, less than 20 per cent of seeds have been planted, and severe food shortages can be expected starting in early 2014.

Accurate data on violations is difficult to gather due to a lack of access to areas outside Bangui for security reasons, and to the much-too-limited human rights monitoring capacity of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). There is an urgent need to have credible and reliable information on human rights violations in order to respond effectively. To strengthen national monitoring and reporting, it is essential to urgently establish a national commission for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In May 2013, the transitional authorities established the national Mixed Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations and crimes committed since 2004. However, it does not meet international standards, lacks independence and impartiality, and does not have the mandate or capacity to address impunity appropriately. Civil society is therefore calling for an international commission of inquiry.

If security does not improve, teachers and doctors who have taken refuge in the capital will not return to schools and clinics countrywide, more than 650,000 children will lose another year of schooling, and another crop will be lost. Rapidly spreading diseases, including malaria and malnutrition, may kill more than the conflict itself.

Let me conclude by proposing six recommendations to the Council and the international community.

First, a key priority is to swiftly provide security and protect the population from further human rights violations. The problem is that Séléka forces distrust the former police and gendarmerie, while the population mistrusts the Séléka forces. It is therefore urgent to establish a credible and legitimate national security force composed of a limited number of former regime security elements and Séléka forces. They have to be screened and vetted under international guidance to exclude perpetrators of human rights violations, and they must be properly trained. The remaining Séléka forces should be disarmed, and foreign fighters, especially those from Chad and the Sudan, must be repatriated. The promotion and protection of human rights should be mainstreamed at all stages of this security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. However, it will take time.

Secondly, the deployment of a large international force with a strong protection mandate is therefore necessary to immediately provide security, protect the population throughout the country, restore the rule of law and create favourable conditions for free and fair elections within 18 to 24 months, as envisaged under the Libreville Agreements. The presence of 1,400 uniformed personnel of the International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, with a maximum strength of 3,500 uniformed personnel authorized by the African Union, is a step in the right direction, but a much larger and nationally more diversified force is needed to provide security and protect the population throughout the country. Such a force would also prevent foreign rebel groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army or Islamist extremist groups, from finding a safe haven in the country.

Thirdly, it is urgent to also reinforce the human rights component of BINUCA. In its current state, the human rights component does not have sufficient capacity to monitor, verify or report on human rights violations throughout the country. Strengthening the component will allow BINUCA to provide the needed support to both security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes and to the national institutions mandated to protect human rights, fight impunity and promote reconciliation.

Fourthly, in order to overcome the humanitarian crisis that Under-Secretary-General Amos described, urgent international aid is needed. Major donors have suspended development aid because of the coup and the provisional character of the Government. However, they should now invest the same amount of money in humanitarian aid and community protection programmes in such areas as strengthening civil society, human rights monitoring, rebuilding schools and hospitals and reconstructing archives and registers.

Fifthly, our Office has documented numerous human rights violations committed since December 2012. In order to prevent further abuses from being committed, these and other violations must be investigated through independent national or international mechanisms and the perpetrators held to account. In her statement last week, the ICC Prosecutor publicly expressed her readiness to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the commission of serious crimes, if necessary. The Council should send a clear message to the military commanders and the transition authorities that under international law they are criminally responsible for preventing crimes and punishing perpetrators.

Finally, ahead of the elections, there is a need for national consensus that the future Government will be inclusive, that the development of all regions will be even, and that nobody will be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, religion or political affiliation. That can prevent pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral violence. The international community should encourage that to contribute to sustainable peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Šimonović for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Doubane (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): As a regular visitor to the Security Council over the past two years, and as my tenure as Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations is coming to an end, I would like to thank each and every member for their unwavering support, care and understanding to me and my colleagues. Members have been friends to me and to my battered country, which is struggling to heal its wounds and once again take its place within the community of nations.

Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam President, on your assumption of the Council presidency for the month of August, as well as to assure you of the full support of my delegation as you steer the Council. We also welcome the new Permanent Representative of the United States of America, Ms. Samantha Power, and wish her every success. We would also like to pay tribute to the United States of America for its presidency in July and thank it for nominating Mr. David Brown as United Nations Special Adviser on the Central African Republic. We also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his commitment to my country.

With respect to Mr. Babacar Gaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic, his team and the United Nations agencies on the ground assisting my people, I should like to thank all of them and call upon them to continue their efforts despite the numerous obstacles to peace, stability and development of the Central African Republic.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms. Margaret Vogt, who, during her term and despite the various difficulties, has spared no effort in carrying out her mission as best she could. I would also like to thank my friend Ambassador Jan Grauls who, as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, has done much for my country.

Allow me to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for the briefing on the situation in the Central African Republic, which has provided us with information on the tragedy experienced by the Central African people. I take the floor today on behalf of my suffering people, which has daily been subject to killings, sexual attacks and inhuman and degrading treatment of all sorts.

Yesterday, on 13 August, the Central African Republic marked the fifty-third anniversary of regaining its sovereignty, but also 53 years that have seen the progressive erosion of the State. On 24 March, the final blow was delivered to what remained of an already fragile State. All institutions of power disappeared. Today, the Central African Republic no longer has an army, courts outside of Bangui, national archives or civil records. The Government is no longer able to pay its officials, nor can it keep hospitals stocked with medication. The country has been delivered as a war trophy to those who have passed themselves off as administrators, tax collectors or local commanders.

There is a dramatic situation within the country, where four-fifths of the people live. The situation in the Central African Republic is very similar to that in a brotherly country where the crisis is being resolved, that is, the people are being held hostage and the social fabric being torn by foreign traditions being imposed from the outside. In addition, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continues to be a scourge to be eradicated. We are pleased with the intention of all stakeholders on that track and we would like to thank them for their commitment to continue the fight against the LRA, to put an end to its rebellion. Let us remain vigilant until the chaotic situation has been resolved and justice is served for all victims.

Today, we are pleased with the different meetings and summits in Libreville, N'Djamena, Brazzaville and Addis Ababa on the fate of the country. However, my people continue to live in distress and look to the Council at this time. My people await peace and security so they can return home to their country, to emerge from the bush and go home to their villages and send their children to school. My people no longer wish to fear for the future of their children and today hope justice will be served because crimes have been

perpetrated. Justice should be served for the women and children who have been victims of sexual attacks, for houses burned and property looted and carted off. The Central African people await the Council's help in order to rebuild their country and finally leave behind coups d'état and rebellions, to freely elect their leaders, and build political and economic institutions in an inclusive manner. The Central African people would like to take their destiny in their own hands and live in a stable state of peace and enjoy good relations with their neighbours.

As duly noted by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2013/470), the Central African State has totally collapsed — and I am very sad to say that after 53 years of independence. The international community must recognize all the consequences and shoulder its responsibilities. I would therefore like to commend the activities undertaken by all friendly countries, namely, all of the countries that are represented around the table here today, and all of our friends in the contact group — the Economic Community of Central African States, the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie — all of whom have somewhat alleviated the suffering of the people in Bangui and, recently, throughout the rest of the country. I would also like to welcome the work of non-governmental organizations, which, in spite of insufficient security, have been providing help to those in need.

The seriousness of the situation in the Central African Republic requires greater mobilization and the involvement of the entire international community. Specifically, the Central African people expect the international community to facilitate the swift deployment of the forces of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, with a clear mandate and significant resources from the Security Council, so as to bring peace to the country as a whole. We also urge that the mandate of the force be broadened to the rebuilding of new defence and security forces that are genuinely owned by the Central African Republic and able to take up the task. The Central African people expect the Security Council to adopt sanctions targeting the perpetrators of the serious violations of human rights described and condemned in the briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General. The Central African people request the United Nations to work in concert with other bilateral and multilateral partners to head the necessary economic and social reconstruction of the country.

In order to render them adequate to this task, the human and financial resources of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic must be strengthened. The human and financial resources of the relevant United Nations agencies should also be strengthened. And, finally, we hope that the Security Council will appoint, or at least consider appointing, a penholder for the Central African Republic, because we do not wish this crisis to continue to be a forgotten one.

Today, here and now, I ask that the Council give hope back to the people of the Central African Republic. I ask this on behalf of the young, defenceless girl, brutally raped in Ouandago; of the mother who gave birth to a child under inhuman conditions in the hospital of Kanga-Bandoro, as Under-Secretary-General Amos just described; of the widow whose husband was murdered in cold blood in Galafondo because he protested when his meagre possessions were looted; of the families in Batangafo and Bangui expelled from their houses so they could be occupied by warlords; of the young student in Bangui, dragged from a classroom and gratuitously killed; of the young travellers who, because T-shirts with political slogans were found in their suitcases, were arrested, tied up, tortured, murdered and their bodies thrown into a river; of the defenceless peasants in Markounda and Kabo whose cattle were seized on their way to their plantations, which were then destroyed by farmers from elsewhere protected by armed men; and of the boy whose school in Ndélé was closed and who was forced to become a child soldier.

Considering our leadership's inability to meet the aspirations of our bewildered, helpless people, I ask that the Council help us bring a new Central African Republic into the world, to rebuild a State in the heart of Africa, a modern State, based on peace, security and stability; one where, simply, it is good to live.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.